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ABSTRACT

This paper presents, in outline form, highlights from the AASA annual meeting clinic on teacher evaluation. The report presents (1) an overview of teacher evaluation, (2) the components of an effective evaluation plan for instructional personnel, and (3) a strategy for developing an effective teacher evaluation plan in a school system. (JF)

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HIGHLIGHTS OF AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

PRESENTATION ON

CAN TEACHER EVALUATION BE MADE MEANINGFUL?

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I. OVERVIEW OF TEACHER EVALUATION

A. Personnel appraisal is one component of the total supervisory process. For purposes of this seminar, instructional supervision is defined as:

1. A planned program for the improvement of instruction.

2. All efforts of a designated school official toward providing leadership to teachers and other educational workers in the improvement of instruction.

3. A program of in-service education and cooperative group development.

4. The efforts to stimulate, coordinate and guide continued growth of teachers in the school system, both individually and collectively.

5. Assistance in the development of a better teaching-learning situation.

6. A means of maintaining existing programs of instruction as well as improving them (Role of a change agent).

B. Modern Concepts of Supervision

1. If supervision of instruction is to improve instruction, it must deal with all components of instruction. Instruction also involves curriculum in its broadest sense.

2. A staff of instructional supervisors increases the expense of operation and complicates organizational structure and relations among individuals. The additional cost is only justified if improvement of instruction results.

3. The supervisor must not only identify and record poor teaching, but must also possess the professional competence to do something about it--and in a relatively short period of time.

4. Supervisors have the task (however distasteful) of ascertaining the effectiveness of personnel at the classroom level. A teacher who shows little promise of improvement must be reported to those responsible for the attainment of institutional objectives. Such a report could lead to the teacher's dismissal. Educational institutions exist to achieve certain goals, not to guarantee employment to any individual or group.

5. It is the responsibility of educational administrators to facilitate the achievement of institutional goals.

6. Supervision entails overseeing of functions and tasks assigned as a measure of control, evaluation and improvement.

C. Status of Personnel Appraisal

1. Current status is primitive -- Only partly in existence or operation -- befuddling and embarrassing for both the evaluatee and the evaluator.

2. Currently there is a tremendous amount of interest in assessment of both instructional and administrative-supervisory services.

3. Accountability has descended upon us because:

   a. Private contractors have been promising criterion based results for a given amount of dollars.

   b. Many people are saying that the problem with public schools is that they are exempt from the law of supply and demand.

4. Upshort of clamor is that public (Board of Education in particular) has demanded clearer picture of personnel contributions to the advancement or status quo of the organization. Specifically, what are we getting for our money.

5. It appears that there are three basic models or approaches to developing appraisal plans.

D. Selecting the criteria for evaluation of instructional personnel:

1. It appears that there are three basic models or approaches to developing appraisal plans:

a. Characteristics or traits approach

(1) Effectiveness can be determined by assessment of personal attributes which are considered to be prerequisite or desirable to instructional performance or achievement of educational objectives.

b. The "end product" approach

(1) Assumes teaching effectiveness can be determined either quantitatively or qualitatively by measuring the outcome of the product.
(2) Some problems created by the "end product" approach to teacher evaluation include:
(a) The pupil and his growth in skill, knowledge and attitudes.
(b) The organization of the school.
(c) The limitations of achievement testing programs.
(3) Pupil achievement or gain needs to be appropriately considered as the administrator attempts to make an objective appraisal of the teacher's work.

c. Evaluating by indicators of teaching effectiveness

(1) Assumes that instructional effectiveness can be determined by various teaching acts. The underlying assumption is that learning takes place on the part of the pupil as a result of what the teacher does. This concept underlies the whole science of pedagogy.

(2) There has been considerable research to find one essential variable critical to teaching effectiveness. It appears that the best earmark of the effective teacher may be his ability to change and adopt teaching methods, as well as plans and objectives, to take advantage of learning opportunities as they emerge in the teaching process.

(3) Most experienced teachers, supervisors and administrators believe that they can recognize good teaching when they see it. They maintain that effective teaching has a great deal to do with what the teacher does in the classroom -- specific teaching acts leading to pupil responses that result in learning.

(4) Trained observers note that <u>effective</u> teachers (those most often selected as effective teachers by other teachers, administrators and pupils) typically behave in the following ways:
   (a) Collect and study much information about their pupils.
   (b) Establish short-and long-range goals for their pupils and for the class.
   (c) Organize and prepare each class session.
   (d) Utilize a variety of instructional materials and equipment.
   (e) Change prepared plans often to take advantage of "teaching moments" or "teaching opportunities" that arise.
   (f) Utilize effective educational techniques.
   (g) Praise more often than criticize.
   (h) Provide individualized instruction for pupils.
   (i) Involve students appropriately in planning.
   (j) Test and evaluate pupil progress frequently.
   (k) Participate and share in all activities and enterprises of the school.

(5) The administrator can expect the teacher to change what he does more readily than what he is.

II. COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE EVALUATION PLAN FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

A. School board policy statement

"Section 438.1 - Purpose of Appraisal --

> The Board believes that all personnel appraisal should be of a cooperative and continuing nature for the purpose of improving the quality of instruction in the school system. In this continuous and ongoing process, the emphasis shall be on the selective professional development of the individual classroom teacher, librarian, guidance counselor and administrator or supervisor."

"Section 438.2 - Responsibility for Implementing the Appraisal Procedure --

> The Board shall hold the Superintendent of Schools accountable for the development and orderly implementation of an annual personnel appraisal program for classroom teachers, librarians, guidance counselors and administrative-supervisory personnel. The Superintendent shall maintain suitable records of the process and results of such appraisals. These appraisals shall be made in accordance with an appropriate schedule of frequency."

B. Purposes of personnel appraisal

1. While the primary purpose of performance appraisal must remain that of improving instructional performance and effectiveness, certain secondary purposes need to be served.

2. Goals for an Effective Teacher Appraisal Plan include:

   a. Promoting a climate whereby the improvement of instructional performance takes place in positive, systematic means.

b. Collection of data to recognize and praise instructional personnel reaching and surpassing stated organizational goals. Identification of human strengths.

c. Ascertaining the potential of the individual to perform various kinds of tasks.

d. Assignment of the individual in the organization where he can render maximum service to the school system.

e. Point up in-service education needs. Appraisal is the means for discussing both efficiency and deficiency.

f. Determining whether the individual should be retained in the organization on a permanent basis.

g. Collection of data (patterns) for purposes of transfer, promotion and dismissal.

h. Testing the validity of the recruitment and selection processes.

C. Characterization of appraisal system

1. Early diagnosis

2. Dialogue between immediate superior and subordinate

3. Timely and sufficient help

4. Emphasis on performance

5. Honest appraisal -- Self-appraisal

6. Adequate documentation

D. Designing the Teacher Evaluation Plan as an integral part of the supervisory process

The teacher evaluation design which I would recommend that you give further study to can be divided into four basic components: Job specification, descriptions of indicators of effective teaching, setting of instructional and self-development objectives and assessment of instructional performance.

1. Job specification

2. Descriptions of indicators of effective teaching

    a. Goals for an instructional program

        (1) Success identity for the student
        View of self as valued, worthy, apart from achievement
        View of self as confident, capable learner
        View of self as reasonably free to express ideas and feelings
        View of self as having reasonable degree of autonomy

        (2) Instruction appropriate for individuals -- options for students and teachers as integral parts of the instructional design rather than as departures from a same-for-all basic plan. Vertical flexibility for continuous progress -- challenges appropriate to individuals. Horizontal flexibility -- options as to methods, materials, and activities to suit differences in interests, learning styles.

        (3) Active, inquiring, self-directing roles for students: In determining goals, in planning ways to attain goals, in execution of plans, in communicating ideas, in evaluating results.

        (4) Priority on awareness of what is happening to the student in the learning process -- as opposed to exclusive attention to product.

        (5) Evaluation as principally for determining starting points rather than describing endpoints.

b. Indicators of quality - signs of good teaching

c. Areas of assessment -- local option as illustrated in Highland Plan

(1) Professional skills
(2) Student performance and student attitudes
(3) Personal qualities
(4) Professional growth
(5) School - community relations

3. Setting of instructional and self-improvement objectives

a. General evaluation and observation skills

b. Program of self-assessment

4. Assessment of instructional performance - observing and analyzing instruction

a. Purposes of systematic classroom observation

(1) Administrative decision-making
(a) One purpose has to do with judging individual teacher performance. This usually involves the collection of data for some kind of administrative decision-making.
(2) Program evaluation and planning
(a) A second purpose has to do with evaluating instructional programs. Here the focus is on the program rather than on the individual teacher.
(3) Direct in-service experience
(a) Classroom observations can be used to provide observers with information with which to help both the new observer and the observed staff members develop new insights and analyze instructional performance.

b. When a professional staff member is observing teaching for purposes of improving instruction, it is extremely important to put such observations into a truly professional context:

(1) The requirements for systematic classroom observation include the following:
(a) Carefully selected purposes.
(b) The development of specific observation skills that are appropriate to the accomplishment of the observation purposes.
(c) The development of observation instruments which facilitate the objective viewing and recording of evidence.
(d) The development of a set of systematic procedures for observing.
(e) The development of methods for analyzing and interpreting the recorded evidence for instructional improvement purposes.

c. Utilization of an in-classroom observation instrument
(1) A set of systematic procedures for observing:
(a) Mutually agreed upon purpose(s) for observation between teacher and observer.
(b) Pre-planning with teacher and students.
(c) That appropriate kinds of instructional practices will be visible in terms of the agreed on purposes.
(d) That seating and other physical arrangements in the room are appropriate for observing the events.
(e) In advance, secure a lesson plan of instructional strategies.
(f) Post-observation conference on appraisal interview.

d. Collection and utilization of classroom data
(1) Observers should place themselves inconspicuously in good viewing positions.

(2) No interaction between the observer and pupils is recommended.
(3) Observers should stay for long enough periods of time (30 minutes minimum).
(4) Observers should make arrangements for a number of visits to the same classroom.
(a) The reliability of observations as a function of number of visits is:

1 visit - 35%
5 visits - 75%
10 visits - 80%
15 visits - 90%

(5) Classroom data collected should be reviewed with the teacher during the appraisal interview.
(6) Data collected should be utilized by the teacher and immediate superior in the development of next year's performance objectives and this year's overall performance appraisal.

e. Documentation of the classroom observation

(1) What constitutes good documentary evidence in the evaluation?
(a) Teacher evaluation should be based on the following components:
(1) School board policy statement
(2) Purposes of personnel appraisal
(3) Job specification
(4) Indicators of teaching effectiveness
(5) Performance targets and overall teacher performance
(a) Performance appraisals: Let the facts speak for themselves
(b) The following plan is an excellent approach for documentation purposes if it is executed properly by the administrator and supervisor:
(1) A statement of strengths
(2) A statement of deficiencies
(3) A statement of the improvements desired

(4) A statement of how to attain the desired improvements.
(5) A statement providing a reasonable period of time in which to attain the desired improvements.
(6) What discipline may occur if the desired improvements are not achieved.

E. THE APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

1. The appraisal interview and its objectives - Administrators and supervisors conduct appraisal interviews with subordinates to:

a. Let them know where they stand.

b. Recognize their good work.

c. Communicate to them the directions in which they should improve.

d. Develop and train them for other roles in the organization.

e. Develop their teaching and human relations skills and understandings.

f. Warn certain employees that they must improve.

g. Serve as an assessment record of supervisory assistance provided.

2. Guide for giving feedback to an individual

a. Feedback is usually most useful if it (a) helps a person understand himself or (b) helps him understand his effect upon others.

b. The needs and wishes of the man receiving feedback should be given primary consideration. (He controls)

c. The job of the persons giving feedback is primarily to help the man receiving feedback clarify his own thinking and understanding about the questions he raises.

d. Suggested do's and don'ts in appraisal interviewing:

(1) Don't "push" the man receiving feedback; try to see things from his point of view.
(2) Avoid being too generous in your appraisal of your subordinate.
(3) In helping the man think through his questions, stick to his and others' <u>actual behaviors</u>; avoid getting into interpretations of his behavior or guesses as to his motives.
(4) Be as specific as possible; illustrate <u>all</u> points with concrete examples of behavior.
(5) To be helpful, avoid discussion of things like individual mannerisms, physical appearance, etc., which a person can't be expected to change.
(6) Develop skills in concluding the discussion
  (a) Summarize areas of agreement
  (b) Agree on areas of disagreement and plan for further discussion
  (c) Arrive at mutual agreement on future performance targets.

III. A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER EVALUATION PLAN IN YOUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

A. Begin by developing a review of research and literature related to evaluation of instructional personnel.

B. Involve teachers, administrators and school board members, if possible, in the planning and development of your appraisal plan. Based on some of my past experiences, I would suggest the following approach:

1. Review and study appraisal plans currently being used by other school systems.

2. Develop goals or objectives which define the desired program outcomes.

3. Identify the model of teacher effectiveness for your plan. This begins when you select one or more of the previously presented three approaches to evaluation.

4. Identify the indicators of teacher effectiveness. (Example: The five areas of assessment in the Highland Plan).

5. Determine who will be evaluated and who will do the evaluating. Determine other procedures.

6. Determine how data will be collected to implement the plan and design or acquire instruments for this purpose.

7. Design the evaluation steps and time schedule.

8. Develop a system for decision-making.

9. Design a formal evaluation system to get feedback on the effectiveness of the evaluation plan.